Having HIV Means Heart Health Medications May Be Overlooked

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People with HIV treated at a major university are less likely to receive medications to support heart health than those who do not have HIV, aidsmap reports. Researchers at Duke University conducted a retrospective study of 890 people with HIV matched by age, sex and ethnicity with 807 HIV-negative people who were all cared for at Duke between 1996 and 2010. The findings were presented at the 20th International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2014) in Melbourne, Australia.

The proportion of each group of people with uncontrolled hypertension was essentially the same, including 17.6 percent of those living with HIV and 19.1 percent of the HIV-negative group. Nevertheless, among those with hypertension (high blood pressure), just 57.75 percent of the HIV-positive people received antihypertensive drugs, compared with 75 percent of the HIV-negative people. Similarly, while the median Framingham 10-year risk score was 4 percent among both groups, between the respective HIV-positive and HIV-negative groups, the following proportions were receiving medications for heart health: 11.5 percent and 22.8 percent received aspirin, 15.1 percent and 23.6 percent received statins, and 35.6 percent and 52 percent received antihypertensives.

After adjusting for various factors, the researchers found that having HIV was associated with a 47 percent reduced likelihood of receiving aspirin, a 30 percent reduced likelihood of receiving statins and a 37 percent reduced likelihood of receiving antihypertensives.

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